

Sinclair  
Broadcasting's  
decision to force  
their stations to  
air an anti-Kerry  
documentary days  
before the election  
is a clear example  
of the dangers of  
media consolidation  
and the blatant bias  
of certain media  
conglomerates.

Sinclair uses the  
public airwaves free  
of charge, but as  
with all licensed  
broadcasters it is  
obligated by law to  
serve the public  
interest. Doing so  
means avoiding  
openly partisan  
programming and  
instead airing  
objective reporting  
on matters of  
importance to the  
public. Meeting its  
obligation includes  
reporting on local  
issues as well as  
national and  
international  
matters. Endless  
reporting of the  
Peterson trial has  
served no interest  
other than the  
bottom line as  
guaged by some  
citizens'  
preoccupation with  
sensationalism.

It is transparent at  
best for large media  
conglomerates to  
claim that  
governmental  
regulation aimed at  
requiring licensees  
to behave  
responsibility  
violates the First  
Amendment because

such entities are  
privately owned.  
The First Amendment  
exists to assure an  
open and diverse  
exchange of ideas  
central to a viable  
democracy and not to  
give broadcasters  
the right to turn  
their publicly  
granted monopolies  
to partisan ends.

Sinclair's actions  
show why we must  
strengthen media  
ownership rules, not  
weaken them. They  
show why the license  
renewal process  
needs to involve  
more than a returned  
postcard. They also  
demonstrate a need  
for ongoing  
supervision of the  
conduct of licensed  
broadcasters.

Thank you.